



## **City of Arlington Mayor's Youth Commission Strategic Plan**

**History:** On May 16, 2006, Mayor Robert Cluck formed the Mayor's Youth Commission to act as an advisory body in formulating programs and strategies for Council consideration.

**Mission/  
Purpose:** The mission of the Mayor's Youth Commission is to enhance communication and a better understanding of youth in the City of Arlington and implement programs that promote entrepreneurship and global thinkers while maintaining a safe and orderly city conducive for youth and all stakeholders.

**Vision:** The Mayor's Youth Commission will be recognized as a voice for all youth in the City of Arlington and as a resource for decision-makers. The Arlington community will value youth and respect them for their knowledge and contributions to the city. Adult commission members will help youth connect to services and leadership opportunities that provide them with the skills needed to become ambassadors for youth in the City of Arlington.

### **Goals 2006-2009:**

1. To enhance communication between youth, adults, and City Council members that support excellence throughout the City.
2. To utilize best practices which promote global thinkers in a diverse society.
3. To provide a voice for youth that is centered on programs designed to promote lifelong learners and business owners in the City of Arlington.
4. To continue to provide input for maintaining a safe, clean and orderly City conducive for all citizens.
5. To enhance programs that provide youth with opportunities that motivate excellence in the City of Arlington.
6. To collectively create a stellar city that supports better futures for youth and all constituents.

### **Activities/Objectives:**

1. Enhance communication between youth, adults, and City Council members that support excellence throughout the City.
  - a. Provide Mayor, City Council, and key City Staff with information about youth issues by emailing copies of minutes of meetings each month and holding Town Hall meetings on issues that affect youth as needed.
  - b. Have Mayor, City Council, key City Staff and others brief the Mayor's Youth Commission on issues affecting youth.
  - c. The Youth Commission will have one representative in attendance at City Council meetings in order to stay updated on current events.
  - d. The Youth Commissioners will meet with the principal of their school on a quarterly basis to keep abreast of issues in the school. This will also provide the principal with time to hear what is happening in the Youth Commission.
  - e. Create a means to communicate to all other youth in the City of Arlington about issues the Mayor's Youth Commission is made aware of.
    - i. Youth Commissioners will hold bi-annual (September & March) Public Forums of youth on their school campus in order to discuss youth issues.
2. Utilize best practices which promote global thinkers in a diverse society.
  - a. The Mayor's Youth Commission will recruit diverse members that represent the City of Arlington to serve on the Commission.
  - b. The Mayor's Youth Commission will invite the various ethnic Chambers of Commerce, LULAC, and NAACP to have representation on its Advisory Committee.
    - i. These organizations will also be invited as needed to brief the Youth Commission on any issues affecting youth.
  - c. The Mayor's Youth Commission will invite persons from the faith community to serve on its Advisory Committee.
    - i. These organizations will also be invited as needed to brief the Youth Commission on any issues affecting youth.
3. To provide a voice for youth that is centered on programs designed to promote lifelong learners and business owners in the City of Arlington.
  - a. Create a means to communicate to all other youth in the City of Arlington about programs and resources available to youth in the City of Arlington.
    - i. The Youth Commission will work to install televisions with a Power Point slide show containing important information in common areas of all Junior and High Schools as well as in the Parks Mall.

- ii. The Youth Commission will work with The City of Arlington's Webmaster to create a webpage within the City's Website that is available to all entities to be able to post information about programs and resources available to youth.
  - iii. The Youth Commission will aid in publicizing the Arlington Alliance for Youth website ([www.arlingtonalliance4youth.org](http://www.arlingtonalliance4youth.org)).
- 4. To continue to provide input for maintaining a safe, clean and orderly City conducive for all citizens.
  - a. The Youth Commission will develop a way for students from various Junior and Senior High Schools to network together every other month.
  - b. The Youth Commission will organize an annual project for National Youth Service Day (April 21, 2007) open to participation from all youth.
  - c. The Youth Commission will organize quarterly (January, April, July, November) service projects open to participation from all youth.
  - d. The Youth Commission will work with the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department in planning activities, including after school activities, for the Recreation Centers. Sample activities include: Wrestling, Boxing, Sports camps (football), Tutoring, Writing Lab, Special Olympics, Arts, and Music.
  - e. The Youth Commission will work to develop an anti-substance abuse campaign that shows the reality of drunk driving. This will occur in all high schools the week prior to Spring Break.
- 5. To enhance programs that provide youth with opportunities that motivate excellence in the City of Arlington.
  - a. The Mayor's Youth Commission encourages collaboration among all youth serving entities.
  - b. The Mayor's Youth Commission will sponsor an *Arlington Idol* singing contest among all Junior and High School students to take place in May.
- 6. To collectively create a stellar city that supports better futures for youth and all constituents.
  - a. The Youth Commission will encourage educational opportunities for parents.
  - b. The Youth Commission will organize and promote an annual college and career fair each February.
  - c. The Youth Commission will promote mentoring of elementary aged youth by high school youth through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

## **2007-2008 Goals**

The Youth Commission opted to implement each of the above activities in stages. For the upcoming 2007-2008 year, the Youth Commissioners chose four activities to focus on.

### **1. Career and College Fair**

- A College Fair is to be implemented in September in conjunction with the Arlington Independent School District. Along with working to invite college and university representatives to the Arlington campuses; the Youth Commissioners would like to see topics such as financial aide and resume building for college covered.
- A Career Fair will be held in February or March to encourage students to obtain summer jobs.

### **2. Arlington Idol**

- The Youth Commissioners would like to plan this as a serious but fun fundraiser with individual competition.

### **3. Anti-Drunk Driving Campaign**

- This campaign will be held the week prior to Spring Break to educate youth about the dangers of drinking and driving.

### **4. Youth Service Projects**

- The Youth Commissioners will identify and participate in various community projects, including the National and Global Youth Service Day, throughout the year.

Other activities will be implemented in later years as decided upon by the Youth Commission.

## YOUTH COMMISSION TIME LINE

<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>October</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>December</b>
				Youth Public Forum				Youth Public Forum			
	Students Net- working Together		Students Net- working Together		Students Net- working Together		Students Net- working Together		Students Net- working Together		Students Net- working Together
Youth Service Project			National Youth Service Day			Youth Service Project				Youth Service Project	
		Anti- Drunk Driving									
Arlington Idol											
	Career and College Fair										

## **Survey of Youth Services in Arlington**

On February 16, 2007 a survey on youth services was distributed to 164 agency representatives and community volunteers. The survey covered topics such as:

- Types of services provided in Arlington
- Other issues/services related to Youth that we should consider
- Services that are adequately provided in Arlington
- Gaps or inadequacies in services in Arlington
- Opportunities for partnering and/or leveraging resources in this arena
- Coalitions that currently exist in this arena

Results helped shape a conversation in the March Youth Commission meeting around the strengths and weaknesses of the City of Arlington related to Youth.

There were twenty-eight respondents to the survey, twenty-two represented agencies, these included:

- AISD Families in Transition
- All Church Home for Children
- Arlington Police Department
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Texas
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Arlington
- Child Study Center
- Clayton Youth Enrichment Services
- CLC, Inc.- Community Youth Collaborative
- Community Health Outreach Department of Cook Children's Health Care System
- Cook Children's Medical Center (Dept. of Psychiatry)
- Creative Visions Social Services, Inc.
- MHMR - Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)
- LIFT- Literacy Instruction for Texas
- MHMR of Tarrant County FAIR Clinic
- Public School District
- Recovery Resource Council
- SafeHaven of Tarrant County
- Santa Fe Adolescent Services
- Tarrant County Juvenile Services
- The Parenting Center
- Volunteers of America Texas
- YMCA of Arlington

### **Where are there gaps or inadequacies in services in Arlington?**

- lack of public transportation services (10)
- after hours safe places (3)
- bilingual services for MHMR clients (2)
- need for free after-school academic enrichment programs; programs for teens are hard to find; affordability of programs (2)
- mentoring and advocacy programs - especially for African-American community (2)
- hands on learning
- after-school tutoring
- health clinics/support
- year-round opportunities
- communication of available services to youth and families
- gang prevention/intervention
- alternative educational services: GED classes, technical/vocational schools, school for pregnant teens
- residential substance abuse programs/day treatment programs
- little or no resources for runaway teens
- drug awareness education for teens
- parent education and counseling – majority of problems with Arlington youth stems from inadequate parental involvement
- job searching
- affordable all-day summer camp opportunities
- services for families with special needs children or severely learning disabled
- faith based youth services
- emergency shelter for youth
- additional ESL programs for immigrant families